

A NOTE ON *ARAEOCERUS PICIPES* ERICHSON

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The name *Lathropinus picipes* (Erichson) is listed in the Bernhauer and Schubert catalogue of Staphylinidae (1912:196) and in the Leng catalogue of Coleoptera (1920:100) as the only representative of that genus in America north of Mexico. In our recent catalogue of the Staphylinidae of America north of Mexico (Moore and Legner 1975) we have followed them in that regard.

Recently I examined 2 specimens collected by E. J. Ford at Shelltown, Md. on 4-11-65. These specimens are undoubtedly the same species but belong in the genus *Araeocerus* Nordmann.

A search of the literature reveals that Nordmann (1837:7) described the genus *Araeocerus* for a single species, *A. niger*, from Uruguay. Erichson (1840:671) described our Atlantic Coast species as *Pinophilus picipes*. Sharp (1886:620) called attention to the fact that *P. picipes* Er. belongs in *Araeocerus*. He was followed in this by Casey (1910:192). Why Bernhauer and Schubert (1912) and Leng (1920) placed it in *Lathropinus* is unknown.

Lathropinus is a Neotropical genus in which the middle tibiae have coarse long spines among the long fine pubescence. In *A. picipes* the middle tibiae are provided with long fine pubescence but are without coarse spines. *Araeocerus* is separated from *Pinophilus* in that the latter has a large central tooth on the inner edge of the mandible whereas the former has a small basal tooth. This is not a very satisfactory character for sorting specimens, as in most museum specimens the mandibles are closed so their inner margins are not visible. However, the 2 genera are readily separable because in *Araeocerus* the pronotum has a row of about 6 or 7 coarse punctures on each side of the midline, a similar row along the lateral margin, and as many more irregularly placed between; the surface otherwise is highly polished with numerous minute scattered punctulae. In *Pinophilus* the pronotum is densely punctured and often with dull ground sculpture.

As *A. picipes* must be removed from *Lathropinus*, that genus is without known species north of Mexico and should be omitted from our lists. Two other species of *Araeocerus* are listed from the United States, *A. obsidianus* Casey and *A. splendens* Fall, both from Texas.

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